IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.121 (c) as per direction. Applicant submits a marked copy of the changes to the claims.

1. (Currently Amended) A button pawl shaft for releasably latching a first panel to a second panel comprising a shaft connected to one of the first and second panels, said shaft having:

two opposite ends;

a pawl on each of said two opposite ends of said shaft, each of said pawls having a portion thereof which is shaped so as to be engageable with a respective keeper on the second panel upon rotation of said shaft;

at least one pocket ~~along~~ within said shaft;

a spring located in said at least one pocket, said spring applying a biasing force which urges said shaft to rotate said ~~pawl~~ pawls toward the keeper, and

a button on said shaft between said pawls, said button permitting rotation of the shaft in a direction opposite to that of the biasing force when a force is applied to said button such that each of said pawls can disengage the keeper on the second panel.

2. (Previously Presented) The button pawl shaft of claim 1 further comprising at least one bezel along said shaft in which said shaft rotates, said bezel connecting said shaft to the first panel.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Previously Presented) The button pawl shaft of claim 2 wherein said spring is a torsion spring.

5. (Previously Presented) The button pawl shaft of claim 2 wherein said spring is precompressed in said pocket.

6. (Previously Presented) The button pawl shaft of claim 2 further comprising a lock plug arranged on said button, said lock plug having opposed protuberances on a side facing one of the first and second panels, said opposed protuberances being positioned to deny rotation of the shaft when said lock plug is in a locked state due to contact of said opposed protuberances with a rib on one of the first and second panels and permitting rotation of the shaft when said lock plug is in an unlocked state.

7. (Original) The button pawl shaft of claim 1 wherein said shaft is monolithic.

8. (Original) The button pawl shaft of claim 1 wherein at least a portion of each of said pawls which engages with a respective keeper is ramp-shaped.

9. (Original) A latch comprising the button pawl shaft of claim 1.

10. (Previously Presented) The button pawl shaft of claim 1 wherein the shaft comprises:

a center shaft piece, said center shaft piece having at least one recess at each of two opposite longitudinal ends of said center shaft piece;

a first end shaft piece and second end shaft piece, each of said first and second end shaft pieces having:

a protuberance at an end thereof, each protuberance being engaged with a respective recess of the center shaft piece.

11. (Original) The button pawl shaft of claim 10 further comprising at least one bezel along said button pawl shaft in which said button pawl shaft rotates, said bezel being fixed to one of said first and second panels wherein a portion of said button pawl shaft is snap fit into said bezel.

12. (Previously Presented) The button pawl shaft of claim 11 wherein the portion of the button pawl shaft which rotates in said bezel has a flat portion which provides a detent position during rotation of the shaft.

13. (Original) The button pawl shaft of claim 10 further comprising at least one bezel along said button pawl shaft in which said button pawl shaft rotates, wherein a first portion of said bezel is fixed to one of said first and second panels and a remaining portion of said bezel can be removably separated from the first portion of the bezel and a portion of said button pawl shaft is snap fit into said bezel.

14. (Canceled)

15. (Previously Presented) The button pawl shaft of claim 13 wherein said spring is a torsion spring.

16. (Previously Presented) The button pawl shaft of claim 13 wherein said spring is precompressed in said pocket.

17. (Previously Presented) The button pawl shaft of claim 11 further comprising a lock plug arranged on said button, said lock plug having opposed protuberances on a side facing one of said first and second panels, said opposed protuberances being positioned to deny rotation of the shaft when said lock plug is in a locked state due to contact of the opposed protuberances with a rib on one of said first and second panels and permitting rotation of the shaft when said lock plug is in an unlocked state.

18. (Previously Presented) The button pawl shaft of claim 10 wherein at least a portion of each of said pawls which engage with a respective keeper is ramp-shaped.

19. (Original) A latch comprising the button pawl shaft of claim 10.